Talks To The Saints

By

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Introduction.

THE central idea which suggested to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints the establishment of missions in the various parts of the world, was, that the restored Gospel might be preached as a witness and offered as a refuge from sin.

The missionary who leaves his home in Zion goes forth with the idea that he is to warn the sinner and convert the unbeliever rather than to instruct the members of the church in relation to their duties. Hence, the sermons preached and the tracts distributed by the traveling elders deal primarily with the first principles of the Gospel. We are, however, coming to realize that the mission fields are the nurseries of Zion. Those who are appointed by the authority of the Holy Priesthood to preside over them are expected, therefore, to use all diligence in ministering to the members as well as in persuading the unbelievers.

The following thoughts and suggestions are directed especially to the saints in the mission field.

Habit and Function.

"So by our leadings be they good or bad
We carve our moral likeness day by day."

THOUGH we may theoretically accept the philosophy that salvation is gained to the extent that we develop our spiritual, mental and physical powers, still the tradition of ages and the habits of a lifetime exercise an influence in our lives which it is hard to overcome. Thus it often happens with the Latter-Day Saints as it did with the former day saints, that many are inclined to linger in the old home of habit and tradition which has sheltered our progenitors for ages, rather than strike out bravely and thoughtfully to build for themselves eternal habitations in harmony with the specifications known as the Gospel Plan.

Through custom and tradition among the people where the first Christian converts were made, the ceremonies and ordinances of the Law came to be regarded as the sum of religion. It was difficult for the Jewish saints to grasp the truthfulness of Paul's statement that, "Neither circumcision nor

uncircumcision availeth anything but faith which worketh by love." When they were wrenched, as it were, from the ceremonies of the Law, by the stress the apostles put on Faith in the Gospel and the atonement of Jesus Christ, some went to the opposite extreme, expecting God would do all for them through simply a passive faith on their part.

To such Paul said, "Be not deceived: God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man sows that shall he reap." *

Peter urged them on with the words, "Add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, charity."

Some of the early Christians having learned and accepted the first principles of the Gospel, after becoming fellow citizens in the household of God, were inclined to rest content thinking and talking only of the principles which they had obeyed. Then, like a man who has finished a day's labor they looked forward to the reward already due them in the form of a glorious resurrection and an eternity of bliss, contrasting it no doubt with the eternal

* Gal. VI : 7.

punishment awaiting those who had failed to do as they had done.

These members were sincere, honest, and kind to those who were ministering in the Gospel. Paul loved them, but he was greatly exercised in relation to their welfare when he wrote to them in the following strain: "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith towards God, of the doctrine of baptism, and the laying on of hands, and of the resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment,***for it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gifts, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*** But beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, even though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your works and labors of love, which ye have shown towards his name, in that

ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that everyone of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end." *

We can both sympathize with the former day saints and appreciate Paul's feelings as he wrote this touching appeal and warning. We, ourselves, come in contact with people in similar conditions, people who have proved that they love principle more than advantage, because they have dared to identify themselves with an unpopular faith. They have won our gratitude by giving us food, shelter and protection when no others would receive us. But being separated from the stronger branches of the Church, standing alone in their communities, they have little to call forth their spiritual activities, while on the other hand they have the teaching of ages inclining them to leave ministerial work to specially called priests or elders. As their efforts slacken, spiritual growth ceases. The carnal desires, appetites and passions held in check for awhile seem to become more clamorous, and to use a parable, when the husbandman returns to the garden he finds the weeds outgrowing the plants, and though

* Heb. VI: 1 to 11.

the vines may still be bearing the fruits of kindness to which the husbandman or Elder is welcome, still, he sees the danger the plants are in and realizes that they may soon be overcome and the soil left in a worse condition than it was in before it was torn up and the good seed sown in it.

When the Elders see that the saints are not making the growth they should, they too, feel like reproving them because they are not kind to themselves, but like Paul with the early saints, praising them for their kindness to others.

The following "Talks," intended to strengthen the saints in their struggle for righteousness, are submitted in a spirit of love and charity with due appreciation of the integrity and courage which they have already shown.

How Can We Know God?

EXPERIENCE has taught us that in order to master any art, science or trade, it is necessary for us to *know* and to be able to *do* certain definite things. Then in order to acquire a true character is it not just as necessary for us to know and to be able to do certain definite things? We have also found through experience that to know things worth knowing we must study hard, and in order to do well things worth doing we must persistently practice doing them. Should we expect to acquire the greatest thing in the world with less effort? Surely God would be "mocked" if this law which applies in all other experiences in life should fail in this.

First, what should we *know* in order to acquire a good character? We are told that God alone is good. Then if we are to understand the good we must know God. Paul tells us, that the things of man can be understood only by the spirit of man, so also, the things of God, can be understood only by the spirit of God.

Hence it is necessary to get this spirit which is called in scripture the Holy Ghost. That this spirit cannot and will not dwell in an unholy tabernacle, is both reasonable and according to scripture. But the Lord has provided a way for his children to acquire this most precious gift. He revealed himself to the prophets, and sent Jesus Christ to reflect His character. If we seek him through these agencies, faith will be born in our hearts; a truer ideal will form in our minds, and we shall be able to turn away from worldly ideals and repent of our sins. Thus can we come into harmony with the new life which is to be born within us.

We are then required to acknowledge through a definite action the vicarious work which Christ has done for us. In this action, which is baptism by immersion, we covenant to lay down the former man with his deeds and arise to a new life. Our sins are then forgiven and our bodies, thus cleansed, are fit receptacles for the Holy Ghost, which we receive through the laying on of hands by those whom God has delegated to officiate in the ordinances of the Gospel. By the power of this spirit the character of God is revealed to us with suffi-

cient clearness to serve as a true pattern for the moulding of our lives. Our conception of His personality, however, will become more definite and complete as we conform our lives to it.

Such is the course scripture marks out to the man who would *know* a true character. Now, what must we do in order to acquire that character?

We shall not attempt to enumerate the many, many gracious acts by which a Godlike character is distinguished, neither shall we repeat the moral code which says, "Thou shall not," but we shall endeavor to treat in their turn a few of the general laws by which the spirit life within is stimulated and increased.

Worship.

FIRST then, the members are required to worship God. Is this requirement to gratify His vanity? Evidently not, but rather to develop our character. Worship is extreme admiration. Taken in this sense you will see what a potent power it really is. There is to be seen all around us the effects of a law which tend to conform the individual to that which he habitually admires. Have you not noticed how the dress, the habits and even the physical form of the individual changes as his ideals are changed by fashion, association or education?

Is it not evident then that if you worship the good, the beautiful, and the true, the impress of such qualities will be seen on your character; and on the other hand, if you admire that which is bad, uncomely, and false, will not the effect be just the opposite? Then how thankful we should be that the Lord has revealed a character worthy of our worship. How careful we should be to call this image up in our minds at least in the morning and evening of each day. How anxious we should be

to meet with our brothers and sisters on the Sabbath day to talk over the goodness, the mercy, and the love of God.

Dear brother or sister, do you meet to worship with the saints as often as you can? If you are so situated that you cannot attend the public service, do you ever call your family together for that purpose? Or if you cannot meet with your family, do you have an hour set apart on Sunday to read the scriptures, or a sermon, or something which will draw your mind towards the character which you have chosen as an example? If not, you are failing to practice upon one of those chords which will bring your soul in tune with the Infinite.

Prayer.

"The little sharp vexations,
And the briars that catch and fret,
Why not take all to the helper
Who has never failed us yet?
Tell Him about the heartaches,
Tell Him the longings too;
Tell Him the baffled purpose,
When we scarce knew what to do.
Then leaving all our weakness
With the one divinely strong,
Forget that we bore the burdens,
And carry away the song."

—*Phillips Brooks.*

"WE know the things of man by the spirit of man and the things of God by the spirit of God." Just as our knowledge of man increases by conversing with him, so does our knowledge of God increase by communing with him. Therefore the Master taught His followers to pray—to talk with their Father and tell him what they needed—to thank him for what they received.

Dear reader, do you pray? If not, why not? Is it because you cannot dress your thoughts in elegant language, such language as you read in prayer books or hear falling from the lips of cultured ministers or paid priests? If so, do not longer

deny yourself the privilege of approaching your Father in person, for between you and your God no prophet, no book, no priest should stand. These are serviceable only to that degree that they direct you to Him.

Are you a father or a mother? If so, would it not pain you if your tiny child should refuse to talk to you because of her lisping tongue? You must know that to the parent ear there is nothing sweeter than the child dialect. Suppose your larger boys and girls should employ others to present their petitions to you, or should read their requests, and should ask you for certain things, not because they need them, but because some one else had asked for the same thing in very pretty language. Would not the situation be offensive rather than pleasing? If we can become assured that a similar relationship exists between us and our Heavenly Parent, then the method of prayer will become as simple as household conversation.

The fishermen of Galilee having a desire to express their devotional feelings, but thinking themselves ignorant in relation to the art of praying, said to the Master, "Lord, teach us to pray."

They were no doubt surprised by the simplicity and brevity of the example given them when the Lord said, "After this manner therefore pray ye, Our Father which art in Heaven, etc." It was so different from the forms which they had often repeated in the synagogue or heard read. He must have perceived their thoughts and used the following plain illustration in order to reassure them :

"If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask for a fish will he for a fish give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" *

The principle here taught is made so plain that if we believe in Christ's teachings we can feel assured that this close relationship exists between us and our Heavenly Father.

The Father knows what we have need of before we ask, but we should also know it, and seek it, that we may appreciate the gift when it comes and

* Luke XI: 11.

through gratitude be bound closer to the One who gives it.

As saints you should be willing to unite in faith and prayer with others, but you cannot, without injuring yourselves and displeasing the Lord, allow others to worship or pray for you, or formulate the words for your personal and private adoration. You should not deny your Heavenly Parent the joy of seeing you increase in wisdom, in faith and in power of expression through your own efforts.

Have you a great sorrow to bear, a strong temptation to overcome, or a great work to perform? If so, in the privacy of your own room, or in the shelter of some friendly wood, bow often in humble prayer and you will come forth each time feeling stronger, wiser and happier. Has discord or strife entered into your family circle? If so, do not intensify it by probing to find out who is at fault, but rather persuade the members to meet for a few minutes in the morning and evening for worship and prayer. Then as a family ask the Lord to forgive your trespasses against him, as you forgive others who have trespassed against you. If

you will do this in the proper spirit, peace and concord will soon replace strife and discord, the atmosphere will be purified and a halo of sweet sustaining home influence will rest over your threshold and hearthstone.

One of the prettiest pictures in English Literature is drawn by Robert Burns in his poem entitled, "The Cotter's Saturday Night." In this he portrays the Scottish peasant with his children and their friends, who have assembled in the humble home to spend together the few hours which intervenes between the week of toil and the Sabbath of rest. After enjoying the plain but wholesome evening meal and indulging in the commonplace pleasantries of the hour, the wise father says, "Let us worship God;" then by reading a well selected psalm and leading the little company in a few of Scotland's sweet and sacred lays, and concluding with a simple but appropriate prayer, he has stirred within each heart those deeper feelings and emotions which not only supply the keenest pleasure, but also strengthen those ties which bind us to our home, to our country, and to God.

After describing the evening thus spent, the poem flows on in the following soft and touching strain:

"Then homeward all take off their several way,
The youngling cottagers retire to rest;
The parent pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to heaven their warm request
That he who stills the clamorous raven's nest
And decks the lily fair in flowery pride;
Will, in the way his wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide;
But chiefly in their hearts with grace divine preside.

Compare with this how poor Religion's pride,
In all the pomp of method and of art,
When men display to congregations wide,
Devotion's every grace, except the heart!
The Power, incensed the pageant will desert,
The pompous strain, the sacerdotal stole;
But, haply, in some cottage far apart,
May hear, well pleased, the language of the soul;
And in his book of life the inmates poor enroll."

Novalis wrote, "There is but one temple in the universe and that is the body of man." We take it, that a temple is an organization in which dwells the spirit of God. If this be true then other organizations can be called temples. The Church, for instance, which God sanctified with His spirit, and honored with his Holy Priesthood was called a temple. Buildings which have been erected to His name and accepted by Him are fittingly called temples. But next in importance to

the fact that we can make of our own bodies temples of God, is the knowledge that we can make of our home, whether it is a palace or a cottage, a habitation which is glorified by the presence of the Lord through the medium of His Holy Spirit.

"Behold I stand at the door and knock : if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in unto him, and will sup with him and he with me." *

"He that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches." †

It is as fatal to your spiritual growth to cut off communication with God as it would be to your natural growth to cut off communication with man.

"Watch ye, therefore, and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."

* Rev. III : 20. † Rev. III : 22

Sacrifice.

One God, one law, one element,
And one far off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves."

—*Tennyson.*

TO draw toward the one supreme God man must go by way of the "one divine event," the atonement of Christ, and move in harmony with the one supreme "law," the law of love.

In answer to the question, "Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" the Saviour replied, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy mind. This is the first and the great commandment, and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." *

When one can fully conform to these two commandments, every other law whether civil or ecclesiastical, intending to restrain him from injuring others or prompting him to do good to them can be removed from the statute books. Such acts as the

* Matt. XXII :36-40.

law now forbids he would then not think of doing, and the things which the law commands would be so promptly anticipated by love, that duty would find herself disarmed and as useless and helpless as the rules by which she once exacted her homage.

Love, however, is one of those tender plants which does not spring spontaneously in the sterile soil of humanity, but must be fenced about with other laws, rules and requirements, which, like the walls and fences surrounding our public and private gardens, are useful and ornamental, only as they serve to protect that which possesses real beauty and value. We are always glad when we can lower these unsightly barriers, or remove them altogether.

How are we to generate, cultivate or develop within ourselves this virtue so that our souls may respond perfectly to the divine law of the universe? Let us see if we can discover in our own experience the most potent condition and agency for developing this love, which is the prime attribute of Diety.

Why does the natural man love knowledge, wealth or power? Is it not because he feels

dependent upon them for happiness, and because he makes sacrifices to secure them? If so, then we have found two necessary factors, *dependence and sacrifice*, which together seem to bring the answer we seek.

Man can develop such a love for technical knowledge, material wealth or political power, through the sacrifices he makes for them that he will rashly risk, and often lose life itself in order to secure or hold that which is evidently only a temporary tool of life.

In moving up the stream of human thought or feeling, we come in contact with this passion in a sweeter, purer and holier form; still the same principles operate. As children we love our parents because we are *dependent* upon them and because of the *sacrifices* they have made for us. As parents we love our children, but not altogether because they are our own flesh and blood. The mother's love is deeper, more tender and enduring than the father's, because she has sacrificed more for them.

Sacrifice not only develops love, but it is the only real proof of it. We say that this man loves

wealth and another loves power, because we see them constantly sacrificing that which they love least for that which they love most. We say that this woman loves her home, her husband and her children, and that another one loves society, fashion and social distinction. In each case we see them sacrificing the one for the other.

We might go farther and say that without sacrifice we cannot know ourselves. We should never know which we valued the more, our character, or our reputation, unless in order to maintain the one we were called upon to sacrifice the other.

The rich young man discovered that he was not keeping the first and greatest commandment only when he was given an opportunity by the Master to dispossess himself of his worldly goods and devote his time to the Lord's work.

"God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believed on him should not perish but have everlasting life." This sacrifice of the Father is thus referred to by His Son as an all sufficient proof that God loves all of His children.

Our elder brother, Jesus Christ, proved his love by a sacrifice which should touch every heart and awaken within it the flame of love and gratitude.

How are we to develop the power to love the Lord our God with all our hearts and our neighbors as ourselves? How are we in turn to prove to ourselves and to God that we really love Him? Should we not expect to find in the plan of salvation some law recognizing and utilizing the two potent principles found, a law by means of which we are reminded of our *dependence*, and required to *sacrifice* temporal means for spiritual growth?

Such a law has been a part of the instructions given in every gospel dispensation. The highest expression of it was found in the Church of Christ when it was established under His personal ministry. The saints were then expected to place all their temporal means under the control of the Church. At least for a brief period they had all things in common. *

This same high ideal, designated as the "Law of Consecration," was revealed when the Gospel was restored in this day. But neither the former

* Acts IV : 32.

day saints nor the latter day saints were able to live up to this ideal, so the Lord has given to modern Israel as he gave also to ancient Israel, a lesser law of sacrifice, called Tithing. This important principle will be discussed in the following chapter.

Tithing.

JUST when this law was first given cannot be determined from the scriptures. But Abraham understood and complied with it, for he gave a tenth of his goods to Melchisedec. *

Jacob made a covenant that if the Lord would increase his substance he would return to Him a tenth of all his increase, thereby keeping forever in mind the fact that the Lord had blessed him.

Tithing was given as a formal law to Israel in these words: "And all the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord." †

The importance attached to this law, the punishment for disobeying it and the blessing predicted upon its observance can be understood from the following strong language: "Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?

* Heb. VII: 2. † Lev. XXVII: 30.

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of Heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." *

The principal good to be derived from obeying any law of the Gospel is, that we thereby are able by the increase of faith and love to draw nearer to our Heavenly Father.

Obedience, however, has a twofold effect, for every special law or commandment carries with it, not only this general result but also a special reward. The special reward promised for obeying this temporal law is that we shall receive an increase of temporal blessings, and all history and experience prove that the Lord has ever fulfilled His part of this covenant.

This law of tithing was restored to modern Israel in a revelation given through Joseph Smith,

* Malachi III:7-10.

the Prophet, at Far West, Missouri, July 8, 1838. It can be found recorded in Section 119, of the Doctrine and Covenants.

At this time there was much public work to be done, such as erecting the temple and other public buildings associated with the establishment of Zion. There were comparatively few to do the work. In the revelation the saints were required to give all their surplus property to the Church.

"After that, those who have been thus tithed shall pay one tenth of their interests annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them forever, for my holy Priesthood, saith the Lord.

And I say unto you, if my people observe not this law to keep it holy, and by this law sanctify the land of Zion unto me, that my statutes and my judgments may be kept thereon, that it may be kept most holy, behold, verily I say unto you, it shall not be the land of Zion unto you."

In practicing this law for the past sixty-eight years, the Church, in its administration and its membership has learned to appreciate the efficacy, the beauty, and the justice of its operation. Every

organization in the world which is accomplishing anything must have an income in order to meet necessary expenses. First then as a matter of revenue, it must be seen that this voluntary income tax is the most just and equitable. It places public responsibilities upon the members of the Church, just in proportion to their ability to bear them. The man who has an income of ten thousand dollars cannot ease his conscience and feel himself entitled to the blessings of God by occasionally slipping a few dollars into the collection box. *He must keep the law* to enjoy its effects.

The member whose income is only one hundred dollars a year is not denied the opportunity of taking part in this great latter-day work. If he contributed his ten dollars during the year he can say and feel, "I have done as much as any other member, *I have kept the law*, I am entitled to the blessings of the Lord, in fact, I have them already in the joy of helping a great cause."

In the second place, it has removed from the worshipping assemblies the collection box and the money changers. Those who come to worship find no established custom or special arrangement by

which the rich can display their wealth or the poor be reminded of their poverty.

Thirdly, it has placed officers in the Church and preachers in the pulpit who are shepherds of the flock, rather than hirelings of a committee.

Our meetings are not religious or social organizations, competing for the patronage of the public, where the paid minister is expected to please the audience and loosen their purse strings, but they are gatherings kept up by the Church for the accommodation of the saints who desire to worship, and that the message of the restored Gospel may be preached to the stranger and the unbeliever. Those who chance to occupy the pulpit are expected to speak as they are moved upon by the spirit.

The Master during His personal ministry seemed to feel it His duty to uplift the weak and the fallen, and to restrain those who were mighty in power. He reproved the rich, not because they were rich, but because they oppressed the poor by absorbing the wealth of the land.

Thousands of men who have taken up the ministry as a profession, feel that they, like the Master, should bravely take their stand between

the classes and the masses, encouraging and rebuking according to the Gospel standard of justice and equity. They believe, too, that the conditions to-day demand such men. This sentiment was plainly manifest at the Inter-Church Conference of Religions held in Carnegie Hall, New York City, November 15–21, 1905.

The paper attracting the most attention and receiving the most hearty approval was the one read by the Rev. Washington Gladden, D. D., on "The Relationship of Moral Teachers to Predatory Wealth." After defining the term "Predatory Wealth," he said, "It is childish to deny the existence of a class of rich men whose presence is a menance to liberty and a blight upon national life." But these ministers, many of them honest in themselves, are handicapped by the methods of support adopted by their churches, in lieu of the law of tithing given by the Lord.

Eugene Wood, who reported the proceedings of this Conference in *Everybody's Magazine*, makes the following comment upon the methods of raising funds and the helpless condition in which the ministers are placed.

"Do you suppose that when they were in the seminary, all on fire with high and holy enthusiasm for the souls of men, that they ever thought it would come to trotting from hen-party to hen-party, from the 'Ladies' Aid' to the 'Helping Hand;' to rigging up catch-penny devices wherewith to get in the winter's coal and pay the interest on the debt; to naming committees to 'mace' the department stores, to get something to sell chances on? Do you suppose the clergy like to do this sort of thing? Not more than you merchants like to do that which you have to do or get out of business. Who can thunder at the Mammon of Unrighteousness when the Mammon of Unrighteousness is right down there in the front pew; when he is on the board of trustees and pulls the parish out of every financial hole, and when in this age of rampant unbelief he is unimpeachably orthodox?"

This is quoted not to detract from any man's character or to reflect upon his faith, but simply to show the contrast between God's law and man's substitute, and in order that you may appreciate with all saints the law which makes our teachers free.

Some who feel inclined to shirk responsibility may ask, "Is not salvation free, and the Gospel a perfect law of liberty?" Certainly, that is the teaching of Scripture. But "to be released from law is to be outcast and not free." "The attempt to assume the privileges of freedom and disclaim its responsibilities is fatal to any nation which tolerates it."

When the Romans became masters of the world, they attempted to gratify their pride and minister to their vanity by relieving themselves from taxation, drawing all their revenues from foreign dependencies. Even the custom of distributing corn free to the inhabitants of the imperial city was established, but in so doing they sowed the seed of indolence, which made the people weak and dependent. They grew selfish rather than patriotic.

This idea is illustrated in home experience also. So long as the parents do everything for their children the children remain dependents. But as they learn to sustain themselves and to cooperate with the parents in providing the comforts and necessities of the home, they gradually merge from dependents to freemen.

When the government of the United States decided to free Cuba, the great majority of her citizens felt that the war would be a righteous one. Many left good positions and contended for the opportunity to take an active part in the battles. Why? Was it not because they desired to share in the glory, the pleasure and the honor of the victories? Do we not all rejoice in any triumph just to the extent that we assist in the battles with our time, our means, or our influence?

God has determined to free his children from the tyranny of Satan. Jesus Christ, as the captain of our salvation has undertaken the task of putting all enemies under His feet. The Gospel standard has been raised for the last time and shall be borne forward until the Right shall triumph and the millenium of joy and peace shall succeed the long reign of sorrow and strife. Do you think that this war is a righteous one? Would you like to assist in its battles and share in its victories? Would you like to use your time, your influence and your means to assist in that cause for which many of the prophets have already given their lives?

The Lord has wisely arranged His work so that every person who desires to assist in the cause may have an equal chance to use his time, his means and his ability just to the extent that he has been blessed along these lines, and the Lord has promised that He will increase the talents of His wise servants.

It is not the mission of the Church, however, to establish righteous law in the world by force, but rather to regenerate the hearts of men through love. Love may be slow in its methods, but it is eternal in its effects. Its victories are won in silence, but they are none the less glorious.

The truth which is to make men free has been committed to us through labor and sacrifice. Shall we shirk the obligation which this heritage brings or rejoice in the opportunity which the Lord has given us to assist in establishing it firmly in the world?

Dear Reader, do you keep the law of tithing? If not, ask yourself the question why you do not do so? If it is because you lack confidence in the Church or faith in God, or because it is hard for you to part with your temporal means, does not

your very condition prove the necessity for such a law, in order that you may discover your weakness and overcome it?

We are told "that the love of money is the root of all evil." Money is useful, but we must be careful that it does not germinate within us this plant of sin. If we are losing confidence in the Church or faith in God, we are evidently not drawing toward God; in fact we are in danger of spiritual death.

As the traveling elder usually deals with the restoration of the Gospel, the first principles, Church history, etc., it is probable that some of the saints have not obeyed this principle because it has never been made plain to them. In such cases the fault lies with the priest rather than with the people. But as this law is so essential to the temporal and spiritual growth, both of the Church and its members and because the Lord has required it of his people, we feel it our duty to teach this principle in connection with the other commandments of the Gospel, trusting and praying that the Holy Spirit may accompany the words, bearing testimony to them.

"The silver, gold and precious stone,"
Thus saith the Lord, "are mine;
The cattle on a thousands hills
I own by right divine.

The forests, rich-stored mountains, plains,
The fertile valleys too,
The earth and all that is therein
Are but my righteous due.

And men themselves belong to me,
They hold from me a lease
Of health and strength and even life
Which at my word may cease."

Then why should men so much desire
To seize on all they see—
Cheat, covet, and appropriate
To self so greedily?

The saints have learned a purer faith;
They own the Lord's just claim;
They're stewards o'er what they possess
And hold it in his name.

Their flocks and herds and lands and wealth,
Their wives and children dear,
Their all, themselves they bring to him;
Thus they his rights revere."

The Natural and Spiritual Man.

"Beautifully shines the spirit through the bruteness and toughness of matter; alone omnipotent, it converts all things to its end."
—*Emerson.*

"THERE is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." (I. Cor. xv:44.) As manifested in form, these two natures are so perfectly blended together, that the one cannot be distinguished from the other. But as manifest in feeling, they are so separate and distinct, that they are sometimes regarded as competitors rather than companions, and in the struggle of life it often happens that one falls a victim of the other.

Those in whom the appetites and passions of the natural man were especially strong established and followed a philosophy which teaches that the object of life is pleasure, that pleasure is not sin, and that the spirit does not exist separate and apart from matter; hence, they assumed that there was no future reward or punishment for action.

The advocates of this philosophy were called Epicureans among the Greeks and Sadducees among the Jews. Their motto was: "Eat, drink

and be merry, for to-morrow we die." This belief had a tendency to make men loose in their morals and profligate in their habits.

On the other hand, those who were influenced more by the aspirations and ideals of the spiritual man, established the philosophy that the spirit is the true life. In order that the spirit might be free, they thought it necessary to weaken the body and destroy the appetites and passions of the flesh. The followers of this philosophy were called Stoics among the Greeks, and Pharisees among the Jews. Men holding this idea of life were inclined to withdraw from the world, abuse their bodies and become ascetics.

The mystery of life was not solved by either of these philosophies, but they played an important part in influencing the actions of men.

The Latter-Day Saints, interpreting the ancient scripture in the light of modern revelation take the premises that only through the harmonious development and perfect blending of the natural and spiritual man can the goal of existence be reached. They claim matter to be the organ of spirit, spirit the impelling force; matter the means of manifes-

tation, spirit the enlightened cause; matter showing the effect, the one necessary to the other, for spirit without a physical organization would be limited in power, and matter without spirit is dead.

Operating from this hypothesis man would be led to purify rather than weaken the body, control and direct the appetites and passions, rather than pervert and destroy them. This would place the spiritual hand on the wheel and the animal instincts below deck. Under such control the craft of life would defy the storms of passion and escape the dead calm of a passive, ascetic goodness.

When gathered about the altars of God, or resting in the quiet seclusion of the church or the home, it is easy to hear the whisperings of the spirit, and to recognize the claims of the higher nature. But when we enter into the fierce struggle for existence, when the appetites and passions clamor for recognition, "the still small voice" is lost in the din, the demands of the higher self are then often disregarded and the brilliancy of the spirit dimmed or obscured by the "bruteness and toughness of matter."

Since nearly all the activities of life tend to develop the natural man, the Lord has wisely given commandments, which, if obeyed, will tend to purify the body, control the appetites, strengthen the will and maintain the supremacy of the spiritual nature.

Among these commandments "Fasting" and "The Word of Wisdom" each hold an important place. These laws, however, are both so simple in their requirements that their value is not fully appreciated.

In the concluding chapters we shall, therefore, endeavor to point out a few of the important results which follow their observance.

Fasting.

FASTING, like faith, repentence, prayer, sacrifice and other laws of development was understood by the prophets of former dispensations. Peter referred to a time when all things would be restored which had been spoken of by the mouths of the holy prophets since the world began. (Acts III : 21). We are living in the day of this glorious restoration, and it is our privilege and duty to lay hold of every principle of power which has been made known to man.

As in the case of sacrifice, we find the grandest illustration of this principle in the life of Christ himself. Immediately after crossing the line between his private and his public life, "he was driven by the spirit into the wilderness." In this quiet seclusion he grappled with those mighty questions associated with the redeeming of mankind. He had to determine whether righteous law should be established in the world by the rapid method of force, or whether righteousness should be developed in the hearts of men through the slow

process of love's conquest; whether He should begin and end his mortal career in a blaze of glory, or try the power of humility and sacrifice, by following the path which he saw winding through Gethsemane and up to the heights of Calvary.

In such a council the natural man could not be considered. Jesus determined to commune with his own soul and counsel with His Father through the medium of the Holy Ghost, which descended upon him at his baptism. In vain did Satan appeal to appetite, to vanity and to ambition. The natural man was passive. Through *fasting*, prayer and meditation the world's greatest victory was gained. Not only had the victor overcome the prince of sin, but he had conquered himself. Henceforth through his mortal career the flesh was submissive to the spirit and the natural man was the willing and faithful servant of the spiritual nature. 'He who conquers himself is even greater than he who conquers a nation'.

It is only a great and good man who can resist using the powers at his command in satisfying his personal desires. A little reflection will convince us that the temptation to do this becomes stronger as

our powers are increased. Our temptations may never be as great as those which the Master had to meet, because our powers are not equal. Still we have the same human nature to struggle with and the same arch enemy to resist, so that we need to "put on the whole armour of righteousness" and become trained in every art of defence. Thus we cannot afford to neglect the principle of Fasting which Jesus employed with such good results.

There is a law in the church which designates the first Sunday in the month as a day of fasting, prayer and offering. The saints are asked to keep their fast until the usual time for the evening meal. On this day the usual church services are dispensed with and the time given to the saints for singing, prayer and bearing testimony of the goodness of the Lord. The amount which otherwise would be spent for food should be given to the Bishop or presiding Elder and by him distributed among the poor in the ward or branch.

Through obeying this law the saints gradually acquire the power of saying to the carnal nature, "Be still," and to the spiritual nature, "Assert thyself". A mastery is thus gained which is

necessary for real freedom. By abstaining from food they experience the feeling of hunger which tends to awaken their sympathy for those who so suffer from force of circumstances. Where this law is generally kept, the saints, having contributed the small amount which they otherwise would have consumed, can break their fast in the evening with the happy reflection that none of their brothers or sisters are without the necessaries of life.

Were this simple law universally observed, there would be means sufficient to relieve all the suffering in the world which comes as a result of poverty. Those who denied themselves and contributed to others would be doubly blessed in so doing, for occasional fasts do not weaken the body, but afford a needed rest to the digestive organs and an opportunity for the system to cleanse itself without taking laxatives for the same purpose. How much happier the world would be, if the people would only listen to the counsel of the Great Creator.

We hear reformers talking about overcoming bad habits, but the Gospel would teach men to form good habits and thus become masters of themselves, causing bad habits to disappear as a natural sequence.

Dear reader, if you have not observed this law in the past, try it for one year and see if at the end of that time you have not increased in spiritual power, physical health and in real happiness.

The Word of Wisdom.

HAVING discussed "Fasting," we will now consider the other temporal law so closely associated with it in spirit and purpose. In order to appreciate the revelation concerning "The Word of Wisdom" we should fully sense the import of Paul's potent question: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which ye have of God and ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God *in your body* and in your spirit."

Have you ever thought what a sacred place a temple is; that it is a habitation where God dwells through the power of his Holy Spirit. Israel received a commandment to build a temple to the Lord. In order to carry out the plans and specifications of this building, it was found necessary to use not only the accumulated wealth and material of Palestine, but Solomon brought the finest cedars from the distant mountains of Lebanon, the best mechanics and artists from the city of Tyre, and gold, silver and precious stones from every country

of the known world. At the time of its dedication, and for several generations afterward, this temple stood as the glory of Israel. Its final desecration and defilement by a people grown avaricious and selfish will always stand as a reproach to Judah.

It was the high ideal of what a temple should be, which developed among the Greeks that wonderful knowledge of art and architecture which made them, in these lines, the teachers of all succeeding ages. The degenerates of a later period who received gratuitously these valuable works of the masters, thought no more of the beautiful Parthenon than to use it as an armory and a powder magazine. In one great explosion, the beautiful temple of Parthenia, the glory of Athens and the finest expression of architectural beauty in the world became a ruin. It is probable that no person in modern times has looked upon this ruin or studied the history of this splendid edifice, without being filled with admiration for the great men who built it, and supreme disgust for those who misused and destroyed it.

Remember the words of Novalis, "There is but one [real] temple in the universe and that is

the body of man." This temple was builded by God and presented full formed and beautiful as a revelation of His own image, and is, without doubt the crowning glory of all his creations.

The art of man is beautiful and we feel it our duty to preserve it—"nature is the art of God." May our eyes be able to see the beauty of this art in all its varying forms. May our ears be open to hear and our minds ready to receive the words of wisdom given by the Great Artist, which teach us to cherish and persevere, as well as utilize and control all things entrusted to our care, and especially our own bodies.

Soon after the Lord gave the Ten Commandments, the purpose of which was to regulate the moral conduct of the people whom he was leading out of ignorance, sin and servitude, he added another law equally explicit. This law designated what they should and should not eat. These *words of wisdom*, found in the fourteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, relate principally to the use of meats. Being a pastoral people, meat necessarily entered largely into their diet. Since they were moving into another country and coming into

contact with strange animals, the Lord wished them to know those he intended for the food of man. He therefore gave instruction suited to the conditions of their new environment.

In this age the conditions surrounding the saints are very different from those the children of Israel had to meet around Sinai or in the land of Palestine, where every man secured from the field, the forest or the herd the food necessary for himself and family. At the time the gospel was restored, we were just entering on this period of specialized labor when the table supplies come largely through the factories, the packing houses, the breweries and the distilleries.

In recent years the civil governments have found it necessary to pass stringent laws against the manufacture of adulterated foods and beverages, in order to protect the people from selfish designing men, who care more for private gain than they do for the public health or character. Because of the strenuous life now led by most of the people they resort to the use of strong nerve stimulants which excite the mind, overwork the heart, and sow seeds of disease in the system. These narcotic

doses are the more dangerous because the weakening process is so gradual, that it is hard to associate the cause with the effect.

If the Lord intended to raise up a people who would glorify Him in body as well as in spirit, should we not expect that he would give some instructions, warning them of these evils which have done so much to destroy the physical temples which He has created?

As early as 1833, while the saints were still at Kirtland, the Lord warned them of these dangers in a revelation recorded in the eighty-ninth section of the Doctrine and Covenants, a part of which is here given.

"A Word of Wisdom *** to be sent greeting *** not by way of commandment or constraint, but by revelation and the word wisdom, showing forth the order and the will of God in the temporal salvation of all saints in the last days.

Behold, verily, thus saith the Lord unto you, in consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in these the last days, I have warned you, and forewarned

you, by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation, that, inasmuch as any man drink wine or strong drink among you, behold it is not good, neither meet in the sight of your Father, only in assembling yourselves together to offer up your sacraments before him.

And again tobacco is not for the body, neither for the belly, and is not good for man, but is an herb for bruises and for all sick cattle, to be used with judgment and skill.

And again, hot drinks are not for the body or belly. (The hot drinks here referred to were afterwards designated as tea and coffee).

And again, verily I say unto you, all wholesome herbs God hath ordained for the constitution, nature, and use of man.

Yea, flesh also of beasts and of the fowls of the air, I, the Lord, have ordained for the use of man with thanksgiving; nevertheless they are to be used sparingly; and it is pleasing unto me that they should not be used only in times of winter, or of cold, or famine.

* * * * * * * * * *

And all saints who remember to keep and do

these things, walking in obedience to the commandments, shall receive health in their navel, and marrow to their bones, and shall find wisdom and great treasures of knowledge, even hidden treasures; and shall run and not be weary, and shall walk and not faint; and I, the Lord, give unto them a promise, that the destroying angel shall pass by them, as the children of Israel, and not slay them."

The Father being so mindful of our weaknesses, and knowing so well the strength of habit, did not, at first, give these instructions by way of commandment, but after a generation of people had grown up under this counsel, it was renewed to them and made binding as a law of the church.

Although it is now a matter of general information, that tea, coffee, and tobacco contain poisonous substances which are injurious to the system, at the time the revelation was given, these facts were not generally known even by scientific men.

The things forbidden in this revelation do not build up the body through the blood, they simply stimulate action through the nerves. There is something in tea, coffee, and tobacco, as well as in

liquor, opium and morphine which affects the nerve centers. (*See notes on pages 59 and 60.)

The occasional use of these stimulants soon becomes a fixed habit. Such habits, instead of quieting the appetites or leaving them in a normal condition, so increase them that reason, to say nothing of the spirit, has no control over them.

The evil consequences following the use of strong drink are so apparent that they need not be referred to in an article addressed to the saints. The moral sentiment of the better class has long opposed the use of intoxicants, but the excessive use of liquors in our Christian communities proves that it was necessary to fortify this moral sentiment by a strong religious obligation.

Excessive eating of meat, especially in warm weather, is not good for the body and it tends to excite the animal passions.

The revelation designating the wholesome herbs, grains, meats, etc., intended for the use of man, sounded a timely warning against the manufactured foods intended to take the place of those produced in nature's laboratory.

Because of the many truths which Joseph Smith advanced in relation to life, its origin, destiny and how it should be lived, Professors Talmage, Nelson, Witdsoe, Tanner and others scholars of the Church, have in their writings, proved him to be not only a prophet, but also a scientist of the pioneer class.

It is good to know the cause as well as the effect of every principle of power, but it is not a wise thing to refuse bread or water until we know why the one satisfies hunger and the other quenches thirst. Still, there are many who will not profit by a God-given truth until it can be demonstrated in the laboratory. Those who have the time or inclination to study or test "The Word of Wisdom" from a scientific viewpoint will find able writers to assist them, and truth awaiting their efforts. The writer however, is not posing as a scientist, nor trying to prove Joseph Smith to be one, but rather as a witness of the truth which he was instrumental in establishing, we declare that which we do know, that God is still watching over his children, desiring to lead them into a higher and purer atmosphere, where they will be above the storms of passion and the ravages of disease. He can only

be successful, however, to the extent that we follow the teachings of the prophets who have been raised up to lead us.

Both ancient and modern prophets have spoken of the perilous times to be associated with the great social upheavals which are to end past and present economic conditions, and finally subside into a tranquil millenium of peace. War, famine and disease are to be present during this transitory period. As we draw nearer these impending trials it becomes more and more apparent that the judgments will come, not as the result of God's anger and caprice, but as the inevitable ending of *broken law and abused power*. How are they to be avoided? Not simply by entering into the door of the sheep-fold, but by *obeying law* and sustaining, and using in righteousness the *power* which God has given and delegated to man.

When the destroying angel of disease and want passes over the land, will he stop to look at the church registers to see who are members? Let us not be deceived by such a fancy, but rather obey and trust this revelation which promises protection to those who observe those simple laws of health.

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people that ye should show forth the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into this marvelous light."

Such were the words of Peter to the former day saints, but they apply with equal force to the latter-day saints. We are a peculiar people in that we claim continuous revelation as it was enjoyed of old, and that the royal Priesthood is again committed to man, which gives the officers of the Church the authority to speak in the name of the Lord, and gives to the people the advantage of divine guidance and assistance.

When God so favors a people, it becomes their duty and should be their greatest pleasure to show forth His praises, not simply in singing psalms, but by carrying with them that clear look and active mind which indicates clean living and temperate habits.

If you praise God in this way you will always find his smile of approval in your souls.

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*Dr. H. A. Hare, Professor of Therapeutics and Materia Medica at Jefferson College, Philadelphia, in his text book on Therapeutics, makes the following statement in relation to the effects of coffee:

"In certain persons the habitual use of coffee may cause insomnia, tremors, palpitation, tinnitus, aurium, gastralgia, and emaciation."

"Theine, the active principal in tea is chemically identical with caffein, the active principal of coffee."—*Dr. H. A. Hare.*

Dr. William Osler who occupied the Chair of Medicine at the Johns Hopkins Medical College, in his text book "Practice of Medicine," says:

"There are instances in which genuine epithelioma (cancer) have developed from the disease known as 'Smoker's tongue," a condition most often found in heavy smokers."

"There are three groups of cases of so-called tobacco heart: First, the irritable heart of smokers, seen particularly in young lads, in which the symptoms are palpitation, irregularity, and rapid action; secondly, heart pain of a sharp shooting character, which may be very severe; and thirdly, attacks of such severity that they deserve the name of angina."—*Dr. William Osler.*

The damaging effect of tobacco is made very apparent when young men desire to enter the army or any organization where physical soundness is required.

Lieut. W. E. Bennet, Jr., in charge of the army recruiting office at New Orleans, reports, that out of 106 applicants during July, 1906, only 29 men were accepted. He stated that cigarette smoking was the principal cause which disqualified those rejected.

Conclusion and Summary.

AS we contemplate the moral, spiritual and physical laws, given by our Heavenly Father, it may appear that they add much to the already heavy burdens of life. Let us review a few of the requirements, however, before arriving at such a conclusion.

First we are required to set apart one seventh of our time for rest and worship. Aside from the spiritual and moral effects which come from the worship of the highest ideals, this law of the sabbath has, by laying a restraining hand on the covetous and over zealous who would abuse themselves or overwork others, given to the body that rest which experience has proven absolutely necessary in order to perpetuate its vigor and power through the allotted span of life. This rest day affords an opportunity for the masses to meet together to exchange ideals, discuss wrongs and form plans for their mutual betterment. Recurring as it does at regular and brief intervals, it has, moreover, awakened a commendable pride and established those

habits of neatness and cleanliness which are such potent factors in preventing the race from reverting to indolence and barbarism. It has done more to lighten the burdens of toil and added more to the sum of living than all other labor regulations.

We are asked to abstain from the use of tea, coffee, tobacco and the use of spirituous liquors. Any community observing this law would at once be relieved of half the expense of living. The people would be capable of a higher kind of enjoyment and have more time to devote to it. Surely the poorest of the poor could keep this law with profit.

We are to fast one day in each month and contribute what is saved thereby to those who need assistance. This law operating in any community would not only relieve the poor, or weak, but also be a blessing and pleasure to those able to give relief.

We are expected to pray with our families, and to pray in secret and to pray for each other, for our neighbors and for the world. This would require only a few minutes morning and evening, still in this age of competition and activity, men think it

should not be expected of them. If the Lord should require us to spend as much time in praying for each other as we willingly spend in speaking evil of each other, the mutiny on earth might resemble the rebellion in heaven. If we would spend just a little time in praying for each other in real earnest, we would have less inclination to contend or speak evil. The time spent in one way would be gained in another, at least we would live just as long and be more happy.

The great sacrifice which the Lord requires of us is to give to His service one tenth of our interests or increase. Even this is not taken from us but is returned to the community. It is like the water taken by the sun from the earth, which falls back again in the form of dews and rains, causing the grass to grow, the flowers to bloom and the trees to bear their fruits, then returning again to its source fresher, purer and better for having passed through the channels of the great system.

"What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly before thy God?" Well did the master say, "My burden is easy and my yoke is light."

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